(c) the benefits that would accrue to workers particularly for settlement of their claims for which presently they have to go from pillar to post for months and sometimes even for years;

(d) whether plan would be applicable and implemented in all the industries and towns; and

(e) by when, the aforesaid Plan is likely to be implemented and be functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (e) A modernisation programme namely 'Reinventing Employees Provident Fund—India' has been launched by the Employees Provident Fund Organisation. It involves re-engineering of the existing work process, re-tooling of accounting system and setting up of an information technology/computer enabled system through networking of all offices of Employees Provident Fund Organisation. It envisages providing all services to every member from any EPF location on a real-time basis. This modernisation programme will enable the subscriber to access his account balance and file his claim from any of the Offices of the EPFO as against the present system which limits him to only one office where he is registered and to reduce the time between receipt of claim to issue of a cheque to 2-3 days as against the present stipulated time of 30 days.

The first phase of the modernization programme involving setting up of pilot centres in six locations covering all four zones, is proposed to be made operational in a time span of 24 months. After stabilization of six pilot centers the re-designed system is proposed to be replicated all over the country in a phased manner.

Beedi workers in the country

† 2051. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of 'beedi workers' in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) the details of the various schemes implemented by Government

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

for providing loans to these workers for building houses and other facilities; and

(c) the number of beneficiaries of these schemes in each State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) The estimated number of beedi workers at present is given in the Statement *(See* below).

(b) and (c) Earlier eligible Beedi workers were provided subsidy up to Rs. 3000 and loan up to Rs. 10000/- under various schemes administer, under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act, 76. Since 14.6.1999 Government has one common integrated Housing scheme, under Beedi Workers Welfare Fund Act, 76, where only a nonrefundable subsidy up to Rs. 20000/- is provided to the eligible Beedi Workers.

Statement

State-wise estimated number of Beedi workers

SI. No.	Name of the State	Total No. of Beedi Workers Estimated at Present
1.	Andhra Pradesh	6,25,000
2.	Assam	7,725
3.	Bihar	3,91,500
4.	Gujarat	50,000
5.	Karnataka	3,60,876
6.	Kerala	1,36,416
7.	Madhya Pradesh	7,50,000
8.	Maharashtra	2,56,000
9.	Orissa	1,60,000
10.	Rajasthan	1,00,000
11.	Tripura	5,000
12.	Tamil Nadu	6,21,000
13.	Uttar Pradesh	4,50,000
14.	West Bengal	4,97,758
	TOTAL:	44,11,275